

Chapter Ag 81

CHEDDAR, GRANULAR, COLBY, WASHED CURD AND MONTEREY CHEESE

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Note: Chapter Ag 81 as it existed on June 30, 1978 was repealed and a new chapter Ag 81 was created effective July 1, 1978.

Ag 81.01 Definitions. (1) "Department" means the state of Wisconsin department of agriculture, trade and consumer protection.

(2) "Grader" means a person licensed by the department under s. 93.11, Stats., to grade cheese, or a department employe authorized to grade cheese.

(3) "Cheese" means cheddar, granular, colby, washed curd or Monterey (Jack) cheese with or without rind formation.

(4) "Rindless cheese" means cheese which has not formed a rind because of the impervious type of wrapper, covering or container enclosing the cheese.

(5) "Code number 55" means a code number assigned to the state of Wisconsin under a federal voluntary national uniform coding system under Public Law 89-306 for the identification of packages of milk and milk products and recommended for use by states by the Ninth National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

Ag 81.02 Factory marks. (1) All cheese manufactured in Wisconsin shall be identified at the factory with the type of cheese; the word "WISCONSIN" or code number "55"; the Wisconsin factory serial number designated by the department; the month, day and year it was manufactured; and a vat designation by letter or numeral when more than one vat of cheese is manufactured on the same day. Identification marks shall be legibly and conspicuously imprinted or stamped on the cheese, its wrapper or container or a tag attached thereto. Such marking shall be in substantially one of the following alternative forms:

TYPE OF CHEESE	TYPE OF CHEESE
WISCONSIN	55 1402 VAT A
1402 VAT A	NOV 8 77
NOV 8 77	

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(2) Barrel-styled cheese composed of curds from more than one vat or from curds manufactured on different days, shall be identified to show such differing vats or dates of production as follows:

TYPE OF CHEESE	TYPE OF CHEESE
WISCONSIN	WISCONSIN
2804 VAT A B	2804 VAT A B
AUG 1 77	AUG 1 77

2

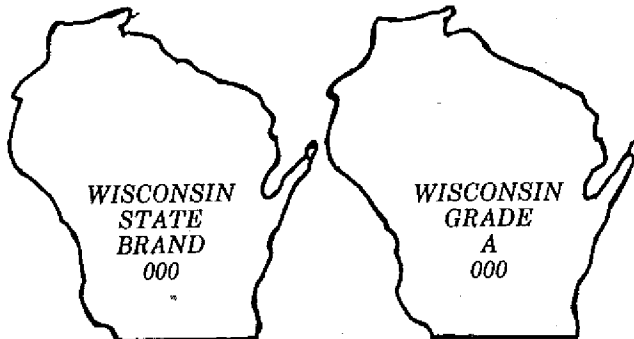
History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

Ag 81.03 Grades. Grades of cheese manufactured in Wisconsin are Wisconsin State Brand or Wisconsin Grade A, and Wisconsin Junior. Cheese which has been graded and does not meet grade standards of Wisconsin Junior shall be classified Undergrade and so marked. Cheese represented to be of a grade prescribed herein shall conform to the standards and specifications for such grade and be graded by a licensed grader or by the department in accordance with grade standards prescribed in this chapter.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

Ag 81.04 Grade marks. Cheese graded by licensed graders shall be plainly marked to indicate its grade and the grader's license number. Grade marks shall be applied to the cheese or its wrapper or container, or to a tag attached thereto, before it enters retail channels, leaves the state, is used in the manufacture of another food product, or otherwise delivered to any person other than one engaged in the grading of cheese in this state prior to further sale or shipment.

(1) **WISCONSIN STATE BRAND OR WISCONSIN GRADE A.** The grade mark for Wisconsin State Brand or Wisconsin Grade A shall consist of a miniature outline map of the boundaries of Wisconsin with the words "WISCONSIN STATE BRAND" or "WISCONSIN GRADE A" and the grader's license number being enclosed within the outline map and so spaced and designed as to be easily readable and present a symmetrical appearance, in substantially the following form:



(2) **WISCONSIN JUNIOR.** The grade mark for Wisconsin Junior shall consist of a diamond-shaped border with the words "WISCONSIN

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JUNIOR" and the grader's license number being enclosed within the border and so spaced and designed as to be easily readable and present a symmetrical appearance, in substantially the following form:



(3) **UNDERGRADE.** The grade mark for Undergrade shall consist of the word "UNDERGRADE" followed immediately below with the grader's license number so spaced and designated as to be easily readable and present a symmetrical appearance, in substantially the following form:

UNDERGRADE
000

(4) **NOT GRADED.** Cheese which has not been graded shall be plainly marked "NOT GRADED" in prominent and conspicuous type or lettering. Such marking shall be applied to the cheese, its wrapper or container, or to a tag attached thereto. Marking shall be done at the factory or the warehouse to which it is first delivered in this state. Cheese which has not been graded shall as a condition of sale conform to the moisture and milkfat requirements under section Ag 81.14.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

Ag 81.05 Standards; Wisconsin State Brand or Wisconsin Grade A. Cheese labeled or sold as WISCONSIN STATE BRAND or WISCONSIN GRADE A shall conform to the following standards:

(1) **FLAVOR.** The flavor shall be pleasing and free from undesirable flavors and odors. It may be lacking in flavor development or may possess characteristic cheese flavor. It may possess slight acid or slight feed flavors.

(2) **BODY AND TEXTURE.** Cheese of this grade shall appear reasonably solid, compact, smooth and close, and shall be slightly translucent. It may have a few mechanical openings if not large and connecting, and may have not more than 2 sweet holes on a plug drawn for testing, but shall be free from other gas holes. It may be definitely curdy or partially broken down if more than three weeks old.

(3) **COLOR.** It may be uncolored or any degree of color recognized in the market. The color shall be uniform, not dull or faded, and may be slightly seamy. The cheese may have numerous tiny, white specks associated with age.

(4) **FINISH AND APPEARANCE.** It shall be well-dressed, well-shaped, and practically uniform in size. The surface shall be closed, sound, clean, and firm, providing good protection for the cheese. The bandage may be

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slightly uneven, overlapped, or wrinkled, but not burst or torn. The surface shall be smooth, bright and have a good coating of paraffin, except for rindless cheese, that adheres firmly to all surfaces of the cheese, with no indication of wet rind prior to paraffining. The surface may be soiled or contain surface mold to a very slight degree. The surface may be rough or lopsided with high edges to a slight degree. There shall be no indication that mold has entered the cheese. The wrapper or covering of rindless cheese shall adequately and securely envelop the cheese, be neat and unbroken to protect the surface, but may be slightly wrinkled. Rindless cheese shall be free from mold under the wrapper or covering and not huffed, but may be slightly lopsided.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

Ag 81.06 Standards; Wisconsin junior. Cheese labeled or sold as Wisconsin Junior shall conform to the following standards:

(1) **FLAVOR.** It shall have fairly pleasing characteristic cheese flavor, but may possess the following flavor to a slight degree: acid, flat, bitter, utensil, fruity, whey-taint, yeasty, malty, old milk, weedy, barny, and feed flavor.

(2) **BODY AND TEXTURE.** Body and texture may be slightly defective. A plug drawn from the cheese may possess the following characteristics to a slight degree: coarse, short, mealy, weak, pasty, crumbly, gassy, slitty and corky. The plug may possess the following characteristics to a definite degree: curdy, open and sweet holes.

(3) **COLOR.** It may be uncolored or any degree of color recognized in the market. The color may be slightly defective and may possess the following defects to a slight degree: wavy, acid-cut, dull or faded.

(4) **FINISH AND APPEARANCE.** The surface shall be sound, but may be slightly weak if free of soft spots, rind rot, cracks and openings of any kind. The bandage may be uneven or wrinkled, but not burst or torn. The surface may be rough, but shall possess a fairly good coating of paraffin, except for rindless cheese. The coating may be scaly or blistered, and there may be slight mold under bandage or paraffin, but there shall be no indication that mold has entered the cheese. The following characteristics may be present to a slight degree: soil surface, surface mold, checked rind, huffed. The following characteristics may be present to a definite degree: rough surface, irregular bandaging, lopsided, and high edges. In the case of rindless cheese the covering or wrapper shall adequately and securely envelop the cheese, be fairly neat and unbroken, and protect the cheese, but may be wrinkled. Rindless cheese shall be free from mold under the wrapper or covering, but may be slightly huffed or lopsided.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

Ag 81.07 Standards modified; colby, Monterey (Jack) and granular cheese. Grade standards for colby, Monterey, and granular cheese under sections Ag 81.05 and Ag 81.06 are modified as follows:

(1) **COLBY CHEESE.** The texture of colby cheese shall be medium open, with numerous small mechanical openings distributed throughout the cheese.

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(2) **MONTEREY (JACK) CHEESE.** The body of Monterey cheese shall be semi-soft and in texture shall have numerous small mechanical openings distributed throughout the cheese.

(3) **GRANULAR CHEESE.** The texture of granular cheese may be solid, compact and close, or may be medium open, with numerous small mechanical openings distributed throughout the cheese.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

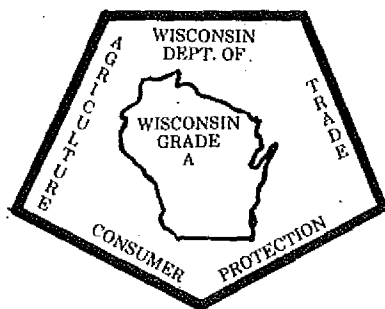
Ag 81.08 State grade certification. (1) The department may, upon request, certify the grade of cheese and charge a fee sufficient to cover the cost of such service. The grade mark or design used by the department in its grade certification may be applied to consumer packages, if such cheese is packaged within 35 days from the date of grade certification by the department. If the cheese is not packaged within such 35-day period, it shall be regraded by the department. Persons participating in the grade certification program shall maintain records as required under section Ag 81.15 (2) and submit such records or reports to the department upon request.

(2) No person shall use or apply the state grade certification mark or design on any cheese which is not graded and certified to by departmental graders.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

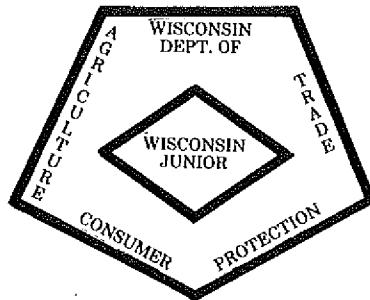
Ag 81.09 State certification grade marks. State certification grade marks shall consist of a pentagonal design polygon with the words "WISCONSIN DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION" appearing around the inside perimeter of the polygon. The word "WISCONSIN" shall appear across the top with the words "DEPT. OF" immediately below. The word "AGRICULTURE" shall appear along the left side, "TRADE" along the right side, and "CONSUMER PROTECTION" along the bottom of the polygon. Grade mark designation for grades of cheese shall be centered in the polygon and consist of the following grade mark designs:

(1) **STATE BRAND OR WISCONSIN GRADE A.** State Brand or Wisconsin Grade A shall appear only under the Wisconsin Grade A designation and consists of a miniature outline map of the boundaries of Wisconsin with the words "WISCONSIN GRADE A" appearing within the outline map in prominent lettering so spaced and designed as to present a symmetrical appearance in the following style or form:

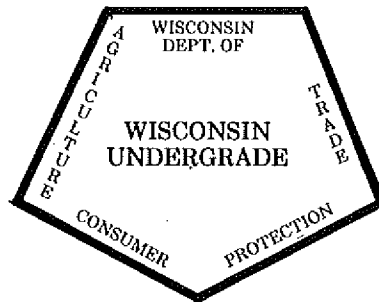


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(2) **WISCONSIN JUNIOR.** Wisconsin Junior shall consist of a diamond shaped design with the words "WISCONSIN JUNIOR" appearing within the design in prominent lettering so spaced and designed as to present a symmetrical appearance in the following style or form:



(3) **UNDERGRADE.** Undergrade shall consist of the words "WISCONSIN UNDERGRADE" being centered within the polygon in prominent lettering with the word "UNDERGRADE" appearing immediately below Wisconsin and so spaced and designed as to present a symmetrical appearance in the following style or form:



History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

Ag 81.10 Arbitration; appeal grading. (1) In case of disagreement between producers and buyers as to the grade of cheese, either party may request the appointment of a grade arbitration committee. The committee shall consist of 3 arbitrators, selected from a list of licensed graders compiled by the department. Each party shall appoint one arbitrator and 2 arbitrators shall appoint a third. The decision of the arbitration committee on the grade of the cheese shall bind the parties. The party who requests arbitration shall pay the costs thereof.

(2) In lieu of arbitration any party affected by a grade certification may appeal to the department as provided in s. 93.11, Stats. Such appeal shall be requested in writing and shall be made not later than 10 days following the date of delivery to the purchaser.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.
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Ag 81.11 Regrading. Cheese that has developed any objectionable off-flavor or other defects after being graded shall be regraded. Original grade marks shall be removed and correct grade marks applied.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

Ag 81.12 Explanation of terms used in grading. Terms used in grading shall have the following meanings: (1) **VERY SLIGHT.** Detected only upon very critical examination.

- (2) **SLIGHT.** Detected only upon critical examination.
- (3) **DEFINITE.** Not intense but detectable.
- (4) **PRONOUNCED.** So intense as to be easily identified.
- (5) **LACKING IN FLAVOR DEVELOPMENT.** No undesirable and very little, if any, cheese flavor development.
- (6) **FEED.** Feed flavors such as cabbage, sweet clover, silage, or similar feed in milk carried through into the cheese.
- (7) **ACID.** Sharp and puckery to the taste, characteristic of lactic acid.
- (8) **FLAT.** Insipid, practically devoid of any characteristic cheese flavor.
- (9) **BITTER.** Distasteful, similar to taste of quinine, most frequently found in aged cheese.
- (10) **FRUITY.** A sweet, fruit-like flavor resembling apples, generally increasing in intensity as the cheese ages.
- (11) **UNCLEAN.** A flavor that is suggestive of improper or inadequate washing and sterilization of milking machines, utensils or factory equipment.
- (12) **METALLIC.** A flavor having qualities suggestive of metal, imparting a puckery sensation.
- (13) **WHEY-TAINT.** A slightly acid flavor and odor characteristic of fermented whey caused by too slow expulsion of whey from the curd.
- (14) **YEASTY.** A flavor indicating yeasty fermentation.
- (15) **MALTY.** A distinctive, harsh flavor suggestive of malt.
- (16) **OLD MILK.** Lacks freshness.
- (17) **WEEDY.** A flavor due to the use of milk which possesses a common weedy flavor. Present in cheese when cows have eaten weedy hay or grazed on common weed-infested pastures.
- (18) **BARNY.** A flavor characteristic of the odor of a barn.
- (19) **LIPASE.** A flavor suggestive of rancidity or butyric acid, sometimes associated with bitterness.
- (20) **BROKEN DOWN.** Changed from a firm, smooth, or coarse, curdy or rubbery condition to a waxy condition similar to that of cold butter or to a mealy or pasty condition.
- (21) **SMOOTH.** Feels silky, not dry and coarse or rough.

(22) **SOLID, COMPACT AND CLOSE.** Practically free from openings of any kind.

(23) **FIRM.** Feels solid, not soft or weak.

(24) **WAXY.** When worked between the fingers, molds well like wax or cold butter.

(25) **TRANSLUCENT.** The appearance of being partially transparent.

(26) **CURDY.** Smooth but firm. When worked between the fingers is rubbery and not waxy.

(27) **COARSE.** Feels rough, dry and sandy.

(28) **OPEN.** Mechanical openings that are irregular in shape and are caused by workmanship and not gas fermentation.

(29) **SWEET HOLES.** Spherical gas holes, glossy in appearance, usually about the size of BB shots.

(30) **SHORT.** No elasticity to the plug. When rubbed between the thumb and fingers it tends toward mealiness.

(31) **MEALY.** Short body, does not mold well and looks and feels like corn meal when rubbed between the thumb and fingers.

(32) **WEAK.** Requires little pressure to crush, is soft but is not necessarily sticky like a pasty cheese.

(33) **PASTY.** Usually weak body. When the cheese is rubbed between the thumb and fingers it becomes sticky and smeary.

(34) **CRUMBLY.** Loosely knit and tends to fall apart when rubbed between the thumb and fingers.

(35) **GASSY.** Gas holes of various sizes, which may be scattered.

(36) **SLITTY.** Narrow elongated slits generally associated with a cheese that is gassy or yeasty.

(37) **CORKY.** Hard, tough, firm cheese which does not readily break down when rubbed between the thumb and fingers.

(38) **UNCOLORED.** Absence of artificial coloring.

(39) **COLORED.** Presence of artificial coloring.

(40) **SEAMY.** White thread-like lines that form on the edge of the curd after it is pressed together.

(41) **WAVY.** Unevenness of color which appears as layers or waves.

(42) **ACID-CUT.** Bleached or faded appearance which sometimes varies throughout the cheese, appearing most often around mechanical openings.

(43) **DULL OR FADED.** A color condition lacking in lustre or translucency.

(44) **PARAFFIN.** Refined paraffin, amorphous wax or any combination of such or any other suitable substance.

(45) **TINY WHITE SPECKS.** Specks resembling grains of salt scattered throughout the cheese. They are generally associated with aged cheese.

(46) **WAX OR PARAFFIN THAT ADHERES FIRMLY TO THE SURFACE OF THE CHEESE.** Thin or thick coating with no indication of cracking, breaking, or loosening.

(47) **RIND.** Hard coating caused by the desiccation of the surface of the cheese.

(48) **SOUND RIND.** Possessing a firmness and thickness, not easily dented or damaged, consistent with the size of the cheese, which is dry, smooth and closely knit, sufficient to protect the interior quality from external defects; free from checks, cracks, breaks or soft spots.

(49) **BURST OR TORN BANDAGE.** A severance of the bandage usually occurring at the side seam, or is otherwise snagged or broken.

(50) **WRAPPER OR COVERING.** Transparent or opaque material next to the surface of the cheese, used as an enclosure or covering of the cheese.

(51) **ADEQUATELY AND SECURELY ENVELOP.** Wrapper or covering properly sealed, and entirely enclosing the cheese, with sufficient adherence for ample protection and the prevention of mold.

(52) **SMOOTH BRIGHT SURFACE.** Clean, glossy surface.

(53) **SMOOTH SURFACE.** Not rough or uneven.

(54) **SOILED SURFACE.** Milkstone, rust spots or other discoloration on the surface of the cheese.

(55) **SURFACE MOLD.** Mold on the paraffin or the exterior of the cheese.

(56) **MOLD UNDER BANDAGE AND PARAFFIN.** Mold spots or areas that have formed under the paraffin, or mold that has penetrated from the surface and continued to develop.

(57) **MOLD UNDER WRAPPER OR COVERING.** Mold spots or areas that have formed under the wrapper or on the cheese.

(58) **ROUGH SURFACE.** Lacks smoothness.

(59) **BANDAGE EVENLY PLACED.** Overlapping the edges evenly.

(60) **IRREGULAR BANDAGING.** Bandage improperly placed in the hoop resulting in too much bandage on one end and insufficient on the other, causing overlapping, wrinkled and loose fitting.

(61) **LOPSIDED.** One side of the cheese is higher than the other side.

(62) **HIGH EDGE.** A rim or ridge which is raised in varying degrees. In extreme cases it may bend over.

(63) **SOFT SPOTS.** Soft to the touch, and the spots are usually faded and moist.

(64) **HUFFED.** Swollen because of gas fermentation. The cheese becomes rounded or oval in shape instead of being flat.

(65) **WEAK RIND.** Thin and possessing little or no resistance to pressure.

(66) **WET RIND.** A wet rind is one in which the moisture adheres to the surface of the rind.

(67) **RIND ROT.** Soft spots on the rind that have become discolored and have decayed or decomposed.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

Ag 81.13 Cheese trier. (1) Cheese shall be graded on the basis of one or more plugs drawn at random from cheese made from a single vat. The plug shall be drawn through the use of a cheese trier.

(2) Cheese triers used for the plugging of cheese, other than barrel cheese, shall be constructed with 6 inch barrels tapered from 13/16 inch in diameter at the large end down to 10/16 inch in diameter on the small end. The cutting depth of the barrel is 9/16 inch at the small end and 3/8 inch at the large end.

(2) A cheese trier used to plug barrel cheese shall be constructed of a barrel not less than 9 1/2 inches in length, with a minimum diameter of 3/16 inch at the large end tapered down to 3/8 inch at the small end, and a maximum diameter of 15/16 inch tapered down to 11/16 inch. The minimum cutting depth of the trier is 3/8 inch at the large end tapered down to 3/16 inch at the small end, and a maximum cutting depth of 1/2 inch tapered down to 5/16 inch.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

Ag 81.14 Moisture and milkfat. (1) The moisture content of each variety of cheese for which grade standards have been adopted under this chapter shall not exceed the following:

- (a) CHEDDAR — 39% moisture
- (b) GRANULAR — 39% moisture
- (c) COLBY — 40% moisture
- (d) WASHED CURD — 42% moisture
- (e) MONTEREY (JACK) — 44% moisture

(2) The solids of each variety of cheese in subsection (1) shall contain not less than 50% milkfat.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

Ag 81.15 Records. (1) Licensed graders shall maintain records showing the name of the person for whom cheese is graded, the quantity or amount of cheese graded, the identification of grading of each lot of cheese and the date of grading. Such records shall be maintained for a period of 2 years and be subject to inspection by the department upon request.

(2) Any person participating in the state grade certification program shall maintain a record of the type and amount of cheese graded, the date of grading by the department and the amount of cheese sold or distributed in packages bearing the state certification grade mark. Such records shall be maintained for a period of 2 years and be subject to inspection by the department upon request.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

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Ag 81.16 Cheese from other states and foreign countries. Cheese originating from other states or foreign countries and assembled in Wisconsin for further packaging or distribution, shall be plainly marked or identified on the outside container or receptacle in which it is received as follows:

(1) Cheese originating from foreign countries shall be identified by type and the name of country of origin.

(2) Cheese originating from other states shall be identified by type and the name of the state of origin or the code number assigned to states by the Ninth National Conference of Interstate Milk Shipments, and the factory serial number assigned to the dairy plant in which the cheese was produced.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

Ag 81.17 Exemption. The department, to facilitate the development of improved methods of production and marketing, may exempt any cheese producer or dealer from specific requirements of this chapter. Application for exemption shall be made in writing setting forth the reasons for the requested exemption. The department shall issue a letter of exemption only upon a satisfactory showing by the applicant that his proposed method of producing or marketing cheese is both unique and commercially feasible, and that compliance with certain specific requirements would be unduly restrictive or otherwise deter development of the proposed new production or marketing methods.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.

Ag 81.18 Authority; enforcement. This chapter is adopted under authority of ss. 93.07(1), 93.09 and 93.10, Stats. Any person violating this chapter may be punished as provided in s. 93.21, Stats.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1978, No. 270, eff. 7-1-78.